



Agriculture in the Classroom

CANADIANA
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The Agriculture Newsletter for Teachers

CHRISTMAS EDITION 1991

INSTITUTE CHANGES PROPOSED FOR LAKELAND '92

While the Summer Institute has been applauded as a tremendous success, some of our participants have made recommendations for improvements. We have incorporated several into this years course.

First, the course will miss the August long weekend and will commence August 9th. In addition the farm stay will be for one night in the middle of the week so that we can give our participants the Sunday for R & R.

We hope these changes will make our participants more comfortable and enable them to accommodate personal needs for the duration of the session.

Again, this year the highlight was the Mini-Expo with 41 displays and an abundance of resources for teachers. We are excited by the response of both educators and the industry as they choose to take advantage of this opportunity for professional growth and communication. "The institute is an outstanding model for professional development and a showcase for effective learning strategies", say graduates of the course.

by Betty Gabert

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Calf roping lessons on a reliable "horse" - Ag Ambassador Fair '90

HOW KIDS LEARN AND HOW THEY DON'T

For years traditional education has viewed learning as happening when one person tells another some factual information. This may or may not be followed by practicing the material to be learned, whether the recipient required the practice or not. The worst case scenario occurs when the learner already knows the material but is forced to practice anyway under the pretense that practice is always good for you. I believe this approach to learning

never has been suitable and, most certainly, is not adequate today.

Research is very clear about many of the necessary classroom characteristics which strive to maximize learning opportunities available to students. These characteristics might be summarized as follows:

Child Centered - working around broad themes such that each child might explore his own interests and make decisions about how to learn and what needs to be learned.

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*A day away from some people is
like a month in the country.*

- Howard Dietz

*Everybody talks about the weather
but nobody does anything about it.*

- Mark Twain

The tongue is in a wet place and slips easily.

- R.E. Phillips

HANGIN' IN *Creative Graffiti*

No man ever becomes wicked all at once.
- Bits & Pieces

HOW KIDS LEARN **cont'd**

Talk-Focused - talk is necessary to facilitate thinking, reading and writing.

Activity-Based - learning happens best when the learner is actively involved in structuring his/her own learning.

Self-Esteem Building - for students to feel they are capable - the program is accommodated to the individual child.

Corporate - small group and individual teaching/learning situations. Each teacher must use more than one teaching style.

Fun - learning must be fun most of the time, if not all of the time. A rewarding experience for the teacher as well as the student.

Learning must be personalized and therefore have meaning for the learner. Ownership will bring about internalization which supports long-term retention of that which is learned.

**WHO WE TEACH SHOULD
NOT ONLY DETERMINE
HOW WE TEACH BUT ALSO
WHAT WE TEACH.**

by: *Don Green, Coordinator for
Gifted Education
University of Calgary*

LOW GRAIN PRICES ERODE BUYING POWER

Nothing gives a clearer picture of the crisis in the grain economy than how severely grain farmer's buying power has been eroded by plummeting prices. The following comparison was published in August in the "Regina Leader-Post".

Just how low are grain prices?

Well, it takes a lot more bushels of wheat to buy a car today than it ever did before.

There are lots of ways to look at the \$95 a tonne 1991-92 initial price for No. 1 red spring wheat and all of them are depressing for farmers.

This is the first time since 1975 that a tonne of top-grade wheat has fetched less than \$100.

And of course, the initial price isn't what farmers get. Handling and transportation charges drop the farm gate price down even further to about \$80 a tonne.

But in terms of buying power, that \$80 today is much less than \$80 was in 1975 before the effects of inflation. And needless to say, \$80 went even further in the 1930s, another time when wheat prices fell drastically.

A visit to the Leader Post archives shows that in Depression-ridden 1932, you could buy a Pontiac coupe automobile for 2,725 bushels of wheat. In 1991, a Pontiac Sunbird coupe will cost you 4,170 bushels.

Agriculture In The Classroom Newsletter

PURPOSE: To provide Alberta educators with a networking tool containing current information on the agriculture industry and related resources that are available for classroom use.

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Not only transportation is more costly.

Furnishing a home also costs more wheat. A sofa and chair set cost about 185 bushels in 1932 and about 550 bushels today. In the bedroom, a three-piece walnut set cost about 285 bushels in 1932. In 1991, it costs about 600 bushels.

Even the small things cost more bushels.

A five-pound rib roast would cost about two bushels in 1932, 6 1/2 bushels in 1991.

Sixty years ago, a bushel of wheat would buy seven Leader-Posts. Today it buys a farmer only four papers.

And pity the poor farmer in love.

A dozen red roses for a true love cost a little more than eight bushels in '32. Today, 12 long-stemmed red blooms cost 22 bushels.

And he can forget about drowning his sorrows. A bushel won't even buy him a beer in a bar today.

The only bright spot is that in 1932, the average yield was a drought-reduced 14 bushels an acre. This year, thanks to good weather and superior crop varieties, the average yield will probably be double that.

Source:

*Regina Leader-Post,
Thursday, August 8, 1991*

AITC Resource Page

LIST OF RESOURCES AVAILABLE FROM AGRICULTURE IN THE CLASSROOM

Newsletter - 5 times a year

Teacher Handbooks

- **Agriculture and Me**
Division I - Grade 1, 2 and 3
- **Agriculture and Me Plus**
New lessons developed for Division I
- **Pride in Alberta**
Division II - Grade 4, 5 and 6
- **Pride in Alberta Plus**
New lessons developed for Division II
- **Space Age Agriculture Social Studies**
Division III - Grades 7, 8 and 9
- **Space Age Agriculture Science**
Division III - Grades 7, 8 and 9
- **C.A.L.M. 20**
Division IV - Career and Life Management 20

- **The Business of Agriculture - Social Studies**
Division IV - Grades 10, 11 and 12
- **The Business of Agriculture - Science**
Division IV - Grades 10, 11 and 12

Videos

- **A Visit to a Rural Community** - Division I
- **Alberta ... A Good Place for Agriculture** - Division II
- **Space Age Agriculture** - Division III
- **In Balance with Nature** - Division III and IV

Conservation Kit II

- **Conserving Soil for the Next Generation** - Division II
Teacher & Student handbooks
and a Soil Resource Kit

Tour Tips

- **Outline for procedures for farm visits** - All Divisions

Brochures, Posters

All Resources listed above are Free of Charge

Order your "Conserving Soil for the Next Generation" teacher guide and student booklets today and receive a **special bonus**. Students design their own soil conservation buttons and the buttons will be produced free of charge.

Teacher resource kits are still available. The kits contain materials for some of the activities in the teachers guide.

Don't forget the deadline for the Soil Conservation Poster/Slogan Competition is **February 28, 1991**. Students in grades four to six will compete for cash and prizes in this annual event.

NEW FROM AITC

The 1990 Summer Agricultural Institute Projects will soon go to the publisher. You are encouraged to place your order soon!

Resources suggested by the Institute participants reflect a classroom teachers idea for integrating agriculture into their programs of study.

Grads and Ambassador Update

Institute grads and Ag. Ambassadors are sharing their ideas at the Ag. Ambassador Conference round tables. The following are some of their topics:

Hutterite Education - The Agriculture Connection
Conservation and the Environment - Soil Resource Management
Education with Puppets - Resource Demonstration
Explore Nutritious Alberta Resource Overview
S.T.S. and Agriculture - a natural
Food Safety - Issues - Chemophobia

Great work!! And thank you for sharing.

ENRICHMENT STRATEGY

A Christmas Wish

- Objective:** To provide an opportunity for creative expression through communication of a wish.
- Related Subject:** Elementary Language Arts
Research using various sources of information
Communication through a variety of medians.
- Preparation:** Make one copy of the "Chase" cartoon on the last page of this newsletter for each student.
- Introduction:** Explain that knowing what we want is a giant step towards getting what we want.
- Procedure:** Now ask the students to read the "Chase" cartoon. Discuss how he decided on what he wanted and then how he went about sharing that wish. Note that Chase has an Agriculture background so he thinks of things related to food or agriculture. You may wish to suggest this as a part of the student's wish list.
- Ask the students to brainstorm wishes - then to select 5 and order them according to first to last choice. Have students chose one of the first 3 wishes as the one they wish to pursue. The next task is to invent a strategy for sharing that wish with some person or agency that may be able to make the wish come true. You may introduce the notion of a genie and lamp or other fanciful ways wishes are expressed in stories.
- Conclusion:** Have the students creatively present their wishes to the class. Review that they have really been involved in a goal setting exercise that they can apply to real situations for the rest of their lives.
- Evaluation:** Wishes and their communication should be evaluated on their originality and the process that was used to arrive at the choice and the strategy for communication.
- Related Activities:**
1. Read other material where wishes are expressed.
 2. Involve another classroom in a wish sharing experience.
 3. Explore the role of advertising in creating and shaping wishes.
 4. If you were a farmer what might you wish for this Christmas?

SPECIAL NOTICE !!!

This newsletter package contains an application form for the 1992 Summer Institute to be held at Lakeland College, Vermilion in August. If you wish more brochures contact Ag in the Classroom Staff at 427-2402.

ATTENTION JUNIOR HIGH AND HIGH SCHOOL TEACHERS

Issues in the Classroom - and resources that may work for you.

The following article was published in the News CAST periodical which is available to schools. If you teach the Junior High Ag. Option, you may be interested in subscribing to these papers.

Irradiation of Food Has the Potential

to Improve Human Health

In early July, Cast released to Congress and the press a statement supporting irradiation of foods. The statement was based on CAST reports published in 1986 and 1989.

The Council for Agricultural Science and Technology strongly supports the use of irradiation to prevent microbiological contamination of foods.

Activist groups led by the New York-based Food and Water, Inc. are opposing start-up of the nation's first commercial food irradiation plant. These groups plan to wage an all-out media campaign against Tampa, Florida businessman Sam Whitney and his company, Vindicator of Florida, Inc.

The Wall Street Journal (June 26, 1991) reported that Food and Water has "budgeted \$30,000 for the Florida campaign and \$300,000 for the national campaign," and that Walter Burnstein, head of Food and Water, "acknowledges that the ad campaign is extreme," "We do this stuff because we're desperate," he says. "We have to use every means we have to stop this technology." CAST believes that consumers should be provided accurate, scientific information concerning irradiation of food and be allowed the option of choosing for themselves.

These arguments against irradiation are based solely on emotion as there is no known scientific evidence indicating that food irradiation, as allowed under current regulations by the Food and Drug Administration, is in any way hazardous to human health. CAST scientists say that there is no confirmed evidence of toxicity, carcinogenicity, mutagenicity, or teratogenicity caused by irradiation of food at prescribed levels of treatment, and the nutritional and taste qualities are not sig-

nificantly altered. The treated foods do not become radioactive, and no new, hazardous chemical compounds have been found in them. Also, no microbiological hazards in food have been identified as having been introduced by irradiation. These conclusions are embodied in two CAST publications, released in 1986 and 1989, which review the available scientific data. When irradiation is used at substerilizing doses for processing perishable foods such as meat, poultry and seafoods, these foods must be under appropriate refrigeration until ready for consumption, as with any minimally processed food.....

**The address for more information is
Council for Agricultural Science
and Technology**

137 Lynn Avenue
Ames Iowa USA 50010 - 7197
The membership costs \$30.00 US.
Members will receive:

1. The magazine "Science of Food and Agriculture".
2. News CAST - the newsletter.

ANNOUNCING THE FOURTH NATIONAL AG IN THE CLASSROOM CONFERENCE

**WHERE: THE MAYFIELD INN
EDMONTON, ALBERTA**
WHEN: OCTOBER 24 - 27, 1992

CONFERENCE THEME: DON'T SHOOT THE TEACHER **A COOPERATIVE LEARNING EXPERIENCE FOR EDUCATORS AND THE INDUSTRY**

At the first three national conferences we learned that there is lots of enthusiasm, desire and good programs looking for a place in the schools or to provide an opportunity for the schools to come to the farm. We've also learned that connecting our materials to the curriculum is an important key to acceptance within the schools.

At this conference we would like to interact with teachers, to learn what would be useful to them, and to have them learn some of the benefits of incorporating ag into the classroom.

Through structured interaction, case studies, show and tell and a lot of enjoyable social activities this conference will:

- show teachers how information about agriculture can be integrated into the Social Studies, Science and Language Arts curricula.
- help those of us in the industry learn what would make our material more useful to teachers.
- explore the opportunities presented by the Science, Technology and Society (S.T.S.) theme being introduced into science curricula across Canada.
- present models for identifying and handling sensitive environmental issues.
- enable all of us to share our best ideas since the last conference.

START MAKING YOUR PLANS TO ATTEND NOW!



